United States Department of Agriculture
Marketing and Regulatory Programs
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Administrative Notice   APHIS 04-1   2/10/04

APHIS NETWORKED SYSTEMS POLICY

1.   PURPOSE

This Notice establishes new policy to guide Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) employees when connecting servers to APHIS networks. This policy is consistent with APHIS Directive 3140.1, APHIS Information Systems Security Program, dated 9/15/99, in which the Administrator delegated to the Agency Chief Information Officer the authority and responsibility for issuing information security related policies, directives, regulations, and guidelines.

2.   BACKGROUND

APHIS has migrated from an Agency with "islands of information" towards operating as an Agency whose information assets are networked and available to all those who need that information to perform their jobs. As the numerous local area networks (LANs), along with their associated information assets, become available across the APHISwide area network (WAN), actions taken by a few can severely impact the many.

The Information Technology Division (ITD) has confronted several situations where APHIS LANs have reached an unacceptable performance level, or where the network has become effectively unusable. The impact has ranged from affecting a small number of users in a field location all the way to impacting every user in headquarters, including the APHIS Management Team. Our analysis indicates that servers are being established on the APHIS network with little or no controls. Some systems have been installed without attention to generally accepted security practices, such as installation of secure operating systems that address known security vulnerabilities. In some cases, applications are installed that can (and do) have very negative consequences to the APHIS corporate whole. Security scans of the APHIS network have revealed new and unknown systems and raised concerns about potential intrusions into the APHIS network by malicious parties.

3.   **POLICY**

Effective immediately:

a.   All server installations on the APHIS network must be coordinated with ITD in order to:

(1)   Assess the probable impact to APHIS network services.

(2)   Confirm Internet Protocol address assignments.

(3)   Enroll the server in the APHIS Information Systems Security scanning process.

(4)   Approve actions designed to reduce/eliminate system vulnerabilities.

(5)   Conform with USDA and APHIS Enterprise Architecture.

b.   Those desiring to install a server on any APHIS network must submit a request to the address 'Server Requests' via Lotus Notes E-mail. The request must include, at a minimum, the following:

(1)   Hardware information, including vendor, make, model, and components.

(2)   Operating system information including name and version.

(3)   System purpose and audience.

(4)   Point of contact for program support, application support, and administration support.

4.   **INQUIRIES**

a.   Any further questions regarding this policy should be referred to the Technology Resources Management Branch, ITD, at 301-734-8845.

b.   This Notice is available on the Internet at ***www.aphis.usda.gov/library***.

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